**Recognition to Israel**

1594. PROF. SAURIN BHATTACHARYA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the establishment of full diplomatic relation with Israel on the part of the Government is indicative of a change in our attitude towards the rights of Palestinian Arabs;

(b) whether before arriving at the decision on establishing deplomatic relations with Israel any stock was taken of the progress in West Asian talks; and

(c) what were the considerations in arriving at the decision?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI MADHAVSINH SOLANKI): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) A number of factors were taken into consideration in arriving at the decision. These included the changes in the contemporary international situation, the start of the Arab-Israel dialogue on a West Asian settlement and the related Indian desire to encourage the ongoing peace process.

**Return of Tamil Refugees to Sri Lanka**

1595. SHRI P. UPENDRA:
SHRI SOM PAL:
SHRI MOHINDER SINGH LATHER:
SHRI RAJNI RANJAN SAHU:
SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:
SHRI RANJIT SINGH:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Sri Lankan Tamil refugees have started leaving India under repatriation arrangement agreed upon between the Governments of India and Sri Lanka; and

(b) if so, how many refugees have so far left India and whether all these refugees have been rehabilitated in their original place of residence by the Sri Lankan Government?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI MADHAVSINH SOLANKI): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Between 20th January 1992 and 1st March 1992, 5852 refugees have been voluntarily repatriated to Sri Lanka. According to Sri Lanka Government, where possible, the refugees have been rehabilitated in ther original places of residence. Others are in the process of being similarly rehabilitated.

**Grant of visas to Students going abroad for further studies**

1596. SHRI TINDIVANAM G. VENKATRAMAN:
SHRI MISA R. GANESAN:
SHRI J. S. RAJU:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Backward Class students who have applied for Visas for conducting further studies in United States and Australia during 1990-91 and how many of them have been granted Visas; and

(b) what are the norms fixed for granting Visas to the students going abroad for further studies?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI MADHAVSINH SOLANKI): (a) and (b) The information is not available with Government, as grant of visas is a sovereign right exercised by diplomatic missions of foreign countries in India and determination of norms for grant of visas to students is in their competence.